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UNCLAS ROME 000820

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EB/ODF (DE MARCELLUS)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [IT](#) [IZ](#) [IRAQI](#) [FREEDOM](#)

SUBJECT: IRAQ: ITALIAN ASSISTANCE TO DATE TOTALS EURO 78M

REF: A. SECSTATE 36580

[B](#). ROME 574

[C](#). ROME 58

Sensitive but Unclassified. Please protect accordingly, not for Internet publication.

[1](#). (U) Summary: The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reports the GOI spent Euro 78 million (\$101 million) on Iraq aid in 2003-2004. For 2005, the GOI plans to disburse about Euro 30 million (\$39 million) in additional reconstruction assistance, though this figure represents an estimate, rather than a hard budget number. End summary.

[2](#). (SBU) Poloffs and Econoff simultaneously delivered ref A points to Luigi Maccotta, Director of the Iraq Task Force at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), and Frederica Ferrari Bravo, MFA Development Cooperation Office Director for the Middle East. Maccotta's office provided a written response stating that in 2003 and 2004 Italy provided Euro 45.8 million (\$59.5 million, Euro=\$1.30) in bilateral assistance to Iraq and an additional Euro 32 million (\$41.6 million) via multilateral channels. (Note: The GOI considers all of this money as falling under its Euro 200 million Madrid pledge. However, Euro 1.3 million (\$1.7 million) was for delivery of medicine and food aid in the months immediately following the ground war and probably does not fit the USG definition of reconstruction assistance. End note.)

[3](#). (SBU) MFA Task Force member Damiano Francovich told Poloff that the MFA Directorate for the Mediterranean and Middle East had a budget of Euro 14 million (\$18.2 million) for new Iraq assistance initiatives in 2005. Previously, Italian aid officials told Econoff that the GOI also plans to make another Euro 10 million (\$13 million) donation to the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) in 2005. These funds do not include money that will be spent by other Italian ministries. For example, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology plans to spend Euro 3-4 million in 2005 on its program to provide the Iraqi government with a basic computer networking infrastructure (ref C). The Ministry of the Environment also plans to continue funding its "New Eden" marshland restoration project in Iraq with an additional 2005 donation of up to Euro 6 million. Assuming all these funds materialize, GOI disbursements for 2005 would be around Euro 30 million (\$39 million). Embassy, however, notes that Italy is facing another difficult budget year (ref B), meaning additional delays in disbursements are possible.

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